

REMARKS

Further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claims 1-16 are pending in this application

Claim 1 has been amended to recite “where the method consists of adding a compound to the surface of the urea granules”, and “wherein the additive consists of a carboxylic acid compound with the general formula XY-(Z)-COOH”.

Claim 10 has been amended to recite “A urea granule consisting of a compound of the general formula XY-Z-COOH”.

I. Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-8 and 10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Nabiev et al. (SU 80661, English translation). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the remarks set forth on pages 1-3 of the Response After Final Rejection, filed May 20, 2011, in view of the above-discussed claim amendments.

In the second paragraph on the Continuation Sheet attached to the Advisory Action mailed July 1, 2011, the Examiner indicates that “[t]he instant claims recite a method with the open language ‘comprises’; therefore any steps in addition to those recited in the instant claims may also be performed.”

However, the transitional phrase “consisting of” excludes any element, step, or ingredient not specified in the claim. Therefore, Applicants’ amended claims clearly exclude the additional step found in the reference, i.e., treating with an ammonium complex to form a coating.

Therefore, the subject matter of Applicants’ amended claims is not anticipated by the reference. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5 and 8-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Snartland et al. (WO 99/15480).

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nabiev et al., as applied to claims 1-8 and 10-14, and further in view of Christoffel et al. (US 3,392,007).

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Snartland et al., as applied to claims 1-5 and 8-15, and further in view of Christoffel et al.

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the remarks set forth on pages 4-5 of the Response After Final Rejection, filed May 20, 2011, in view of the above-discussed claim amendments.

In the fifth, eighth and tenth paragraphs on the Continuation Sheet attached to the Advisory Action mailed July 1, 2011, the Examiner again disregards Applicants' previously presented arguments, on the basis that the claims recite the method "comprises", which does not limit the steps used, and therefore, any steps in addition to those recited in the instant claims may also be performed.

However, as discussed above, Applicants' amended claims clearly exclude the additional step found in the Snartland et al. and Nabiev et al. references, i.e., treating with an ammonium complex to form a coating. Further, as discussed in the penultimate paragraph on page 5 of the Response After Final Rejection filed May 20, 2011, the Christoffel et al. reference provides no reason or rationale to omit the second step of treating with an ammonium complex to form a shell coating, as taught by Nabiev et al. and Snartland et al.

Therefore, the subject matter of Applicants' claims is clearly patentable over the teachings of the cited references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

For these reasons, Applicants take the position that the presently claimed invention is clearly patentable over the applied references.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the rejections set forth by the Examiner have been overcome, and that the application is in condition for allowance. Such allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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